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C O N F I D E N T I A L SAN SALVADOR 002921

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DEPARTMENT FOR IO/UNP

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/08/2016

TAGS: ES PGOV PREL

SUBJECT: SALVADORAN DESIRE FOR UN SECRETARY GENERAL'S  
PRESENCE AT PEACE ACCORDS CEREMONY

Classified By: Charge Michael A. Butler, Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) Foreign Minister Francisco Lainez contacted Charge February 8 to outline the importance the GOES places on new UN Secretary General Ban Kim's attendance at January 16 ceremonies marking the fifteenth anniversary of the Peace Accords that ended the nation's 12-year armed conflict, and to ask USG support in convincing Kim to attend. According to Lainez, all Central American nations, as well as Mexico, Colombia, and the Dominican Republic will be represented at the head-of-state level. Members of the opposition Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) have heretofore boycotted such ceremonies, but have indicated their intention to participate--for the first time--next month.

¶2. (C) Lainez believes that the Secretary General's presence is especially important in view of FMLN participation, and will highlight what is arguably the UN's greatest success story in facilitating the peaceful resolution of a civil war.

He said that the GOES had contacted Kim through Korean channels, and found him interested in participating in the event. However, Lainez added that the UN Secretariat was pressing Kim to regret the invitation, arguing that he should not be traveling so soon after taking office. He asked that the USG weigh in with the UN in support of the Salvadoran invitation.

¶3. (C) COMMENT: Post supports Lainez's request.  
Butler